

Sharon Herald
February 22, 2010

The building housing the Farrell Area School District library was built in 1971 and hadn't been touched since.

But Monday it opened anew with a renovated library, 1,400 new books and 12 state-of-the-art computers in the culmination of a three-year project funded by \$200,000 secured by U.S. Rep Jason Altmire, Wexford, D-4th District.

"This renovation is a long time coming," Superintendent Lora Adams-King said. "Congressman Altmire, for the funding, we are forever indebted to you. You have made an investment in the Farrell Area School District and that investment is not in vain."

The federal funding will provide for a computerized cataloging system to keep track of the library's collection and hiring two library aides. The library has new carpeting, shelving and furniture in addition to the new books and computers. The superintendent said when the building opened 40 years ago there was no walkway to get into the building, but the new sidewalk will facilitate an important aspect of the project—the fact that the library will be open to the public.

The new hours will be from 3 to 7 p.m. during weekdays and from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on the second and fourth Saturdays of the month beginning this weekend.

Officials say they hope to offer family literacy activities and implement a service-learning program through which students will provide free computer training to the public.

"It is our hope that this library will be a place where children are encouraged to read, where adults can learn computer skills, and where the entire community will feel welcome," high school library Tracy Hood said.

Jaylin Archie, an eight-grade student at Farrell, said he helped to stack the new books as part of a project with the group New Lights of America through the Urban League. "We got invited to come here in honor of the congressman, and I want to make sure I supported the congressman," he said, adding he's already used one of the new books for a school research project. He said he and other students have been anxiously awaiting the new facilities.

"People have been talking about how they couldn't get in to use the books," he said. "I think it's better coming here (instead of having to leave the building) for a couple minutes after school to get books." Altmire said when he came to Farrell a few years ago he met a promising student with a history book from 1980.

"I decided at that time I was going to do everything I could to make this day come," he said. "When you think of everything that's been done here in Farrell it's amazing. ... I'm very excited to be here."